

0

9A

NEW YORK TIMES
17 May 1985

FILE ONLY

U.N. AIDE IS FREED BY BEIRUT CAPTORS

Irishman Was Held 36 Hours
— Holy War Group Offers
a Deal on Six Others

BEIRUT, Lebanon, May 16 (AP) — A United Nations official was freed unharmed tonight, 36 hours after he was kidnapped by gunmen in Moslem West Beirut, officials said.

The freed man was Aidan Walsh, a 49-year-old Irishman who is deputy director of the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which looks after Palestinian refugees in Lebanon.

Meanwhile, the shadowy group known as Islamic Holy War said it would free at least six American and French hostages if Kuwait releases the men convicted of bombing the United States and French Embassies there on Dec. 12, 1983. Five people were killed and 86 were wounded in the attacks.

In statements accompanied by pictures of six hostages kidnapped in Beirut, the group said it would "terrorize America and France forever" unless Kuwait frees the men convicted of bombing the United States and French Embassies and other targets there.

In one of three Arabic-language statements calling on the United States and French Governments to pressure Kuwait, Islamic Holy War said: "We will not wait long."

[In Washington, a senior State Department official said Iran "is on notice" that it will suffer consequences, including possible military attack, if any of the American hostages is executed.]

"Maneuvering will get us nowhere and efforts to make us soften will be useless," the statement from Islamic Holy War, which is a fundamentalist Shiite Moslem group that supports the policies of Iran's Shiite leader, Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, said. "Don't force us into doing something which will never be forgotten."

Color photographs of four kidnapped Americans and two French diplomats accompanied the statements, which were delivered to daily newspapers.

Grainy Photographs

The grainy pictures, taken against different backdrops, showed Terry A. Anderson, 37 years old, chief Middle East correspondent of The Associated Press; William Buckley, 56, a United States Embassy official; the Rev. Benjamin Weir, a 60-year-old Presbyterian minister; the Rev. Lawrence Martin Jenco, 50, a Roman Catholic priest, and the French diplomats, Marcel Fontaine, 45, and Marcel Carton, 62.

There was no indication when or where the photographs were taken. None of the statements mentioned Peter Kilburn, 60, a librarian at the American University of Beirut who was reported missing Dec. 3 when he failed to report for work. Islamic Holy War claimed later, in a telephone call to The Associated Press, that it had kidnapped him.

In the Kuwait bombings, 20 men from Iraq, Kuwait and Lebanon were convicted, three of them in absentia. Three of those jailed have been sentenced to death.

One of the Holy War statements said, in a passage directed to the hostages' families: "For the last time, we wish to stress that all contact with your relatives will be cut off and the consequences will be catastrophic if you do not act seriously and force your governments to intervene for the release" of the men in Kuwait.